

Senate Bill No. 1354

CHAPTER 650

An act to amend Sections 54690, 54691, and 54692 of the Education Code, relating to instructional programs.

[Approved by Governor September 30, 2010. Filed with
Secretary of State September 30, 2010.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1354, Hancock. Partnership academies.

Existing law provides for the establishment of partnership academies for pupils at risk of dropping out of school by participating school districts that meet specified eligibility requirements, and requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to issue grants to school districts for planning, establishing, and maintaining the partnership academies. The Superintendent is authorized to issue a maximum of 155 grants per year for purposes of planning partnership academies. Existing law sets forth criteria for a pupil to be considered at risk of dropping out of school.

This bill would delete the limit on the number of grants the Superintendent is authorized to issue for planning partnership academies. The bill would expand the criteria for determining whether a pupil is at risk of dropping out of school, and would revise the requirements for the enrollment of pupils who are not at risk. The bill would require a school district to provide an assurance that each academy pupil will be provided with career technical courses in each grade level that are part of an occupational course sequence that targets comprehensive skills, and meets certain other requirements. The bill would make other conforming changes, and would also make technical, nonsubstantive changes.

The bill would become operative on July 1, 2011, and would require its provisions to be implemented commencing with the 2011–12 school year.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 54690 of the Education Code is amended to read:

54690. (a) The Legislature hereby finds and declares that the partnership academies program has proven to be a highly effective state-school-private sector partnership, providing combined academic and occupational training to high school pupils who present a high risk of dropping out of school, and motivating those pupils to stay in school and graduate. Partnership academies are functioning in high schools across the state, with occupational education and skills development successfully offered in California's 15 different industry sectors, including electronics, computer technology, finance,

agribusiness, alternative energy, environmental design and construction, graphic arts and printing, international business, and space. Partnership academies have been honored with national awards for excellence, and the California partnership academies have been given high accolades in various textbooks and studies addressing career technical education programs.

(b) The Legislature finds the partnership academies are in the forefront of school efforts to integrate academic and career technical education and that they can be effective in providing an integrated learning program and high motivation toward pursuing skilled occupational fields to pupils at risk of dropping out of school and to pupils not motivated by the regular educational curriculum. Further, the Legislature finds the partnership academies can make a very positive contribution towards meeting the needs of the state for a highly skilled and educated workforce in the 21st century.

(c) Therefore, the Legislature hereby states its intent to expand the number of partnership academies in this state's high schools, hereafter to be known as California Partnership Academies; to broaden the availability of these learning experiences to interested pupils who do not meet the criteria of "at-risk" pupils; and to encourage the establishment of academies whose occupational fields address the needs of developing technologies.

(d) For purposes of this article, an "at-risk" pupil means a pupil enrolled in high school who is at risk of dropping out of school, as indicated by at least three of the following criteria:

(1) Past record of irregular attendance. For purposes of this section, "irregular attendance" means absence from school 20 percent or more of the school year.

(2) Past record of underachievement in which the pupil is at least one-third of a year behind the coursework for the respective grade level, or as demonstrated by credits achieved.

(3) Past record of low motivation or a disinterest in the regular school program.

(4) Disadvantaged economically.

(5) Scoring below basic or far below basic in mathematics or English language arts on the standardized test administered pursuant to Article 4 (commencing with Section 60640) of Chapter 5 of Part 33.

(6) Maintaining a grade point average of 2.2 or below, or the equivalent of a C minus.

(e) Up to one-half of the pupils enrolled at a partnership academy may be pupils who do not meet the criteria of "at-risk" pupils.

(f) The department may expend no more than 5 percent of the funds received to carry out this article on administrative expenses.

SEC. 2. Section 54691 of the Education Code is amended to read:

54691. Commencing with the 1993–94 fiscal year, from the funds appropriated for that purpose, the Superintendent shall issue grants to school districts maintaining high schools that meet the specifications of Section 54692, for purposes of planning, establishing, and maintaining academies, as follows:

(a) The Superintendent may issue planning grants for purposes of planning partnership academies. The Superintendent shall ensure that the planning grants are equitably distributed among high-wealth and low-wealth school districts in urban, rural, and suburban areas. Each planning grant shall be in the amount of fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000).

(b) For the 1993–94 fiscal year, and each fiscal year thereafter, the Superintendent may issue grants for the implementation and maintenance of existing academies or academies planned pursuant to subdivision (a). Implementation and maintenance grants shall be calculated in accordance with the following schedule:

(1) Districts operating academies may receive one thousand four hundred dollars (\$1,400) per year for each qualified pupil enrolled in an academy during the first year of that academy’s operation, provided that no more than forty-two thousand dollars (\$42,000) may be granted to any one academy for the initial year.

(2) Districts operating academies may receive one thousand two hundred dollars (\$1,200) for each qualified pupil enrolled in an academy during the second year of that academy’s operation, provided that no more than seventy-two thousand dollars (\$72,000) may be granted to any one academy for the second year.

(3) Districts operating academies may receive nine hundred dollars (\$900) for each qualified pupil enrolled in an academy during the third and following years of that academy’s operation, provided that no more than eighty-one thousand dollars (\$81,000) may be granted to any one academy for each fiscal year.

(c) For purposes of this section, a qualified pupil is a pupil who is enrolled in a partnership academy for the 10th, 11th, or 12th grade, obtains 90 percent of the credits each academic year in courses that are required for graduation, and does any of the following:

(1) Successfully completes a school year during the 10th grade with an attendance record of no less than 80 percent.

(2) Successfully completes a school year during the 11th grade with an attendance record of no less than 80 percent.

(3) Successfully graduates after the 12th grade.

A pupil enrolled in an academy who successfully completes only one semester with regard to enrollment, attendance, and credits within the school year is considered qualified for that semester and the district may receive one-half of the funds specified under subdivision (b) for that pupil.

(d) At the end of each school year, school districts that have been approved to operate academies pursuant to this article shall certify the following information to the Superintendent:

(1) The operation of each academy in accordance with this article, including Sections 54692 and 54694.

(2) The number of qualified pupils enrolled during the just completed school year, by grade level, for each academy operated by the district.

(3) The amount of matching funds and the dollar value of in-kind support made available to each academy in accordance with subdivisions (a) and (b) of Section 54692.

(e) The Superintendent shall adjust each school district's grant in accordance with the certification made to him or her pursuant to subdivision (d) or in accordance with any discrepancies to the certification that may be revealed by audit. Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, the Superintendent may advance up to 50 percent of the funds as he or she deems appropriate to districts that are approved to operate, or plan to operate partnership academies.

(f) Funds granted to school districts pursuant to this article may be expended without regard to fiscal year. However, the funds must be expended for the maintenance and operation of academies.

SEC. 3. Section 54692 of the Education Code is amended to read:

54692. In order to be eligible to receive funding pursuant to this article, a school district shall provide all of the following:

(a) An amount equal to a 100 percent match of all funds received pursuant to this article in the form of direct and in-kind support provided by the district.

(b) An amount equal to a 100 percent match of all funds received pursuant to this article in the form of direct and in-kind support provided by participating companies or other private sector organizations.

(c) An assurance that state funds provided by the partnership academies program shall be used only for the development, operation, and support of partnership academies.

(d) An assurance that each academy will be established as a "school within a school." Academy teachers shall work as a team in planning, teaching, and troubleshooting program activities. Classes in the academy program shall be limited to academy pupils as specified in subdivision (e). Each participating school district shall establish an advisory committee consisting of individuals involved in academy operations, including school district and school administrators, lead teachers, and representatives of the private sector.

(e) Assurance that each academy pupil will be provided with the following:

(1) Instruction in at least three academic subjects each regular school term that prepares the pupil for a regular high school diploma, and, where possible and appropriate, to meet the subject requirements for admission to the California State University and the University of California. These subjects should contribute to an understanding of the occupational field of the academy.

(2) Career technical education courses offered at each grade level at the academy that are part of an occupational course sequence that targets comprehensive skills and that does the following:

(A) Provides career technical education in high skill occupations of regional and local economic need.

(B) Focuses on occupations requiring comprehensive skills leading to higher than entry-level wages, or the possibility of significant wage increases after a few years on the job, or both.

(C) Provides a sequence of courses that build upon each other in knowledge, skill development, and experience, and ends in a capstone course that includes an internship component.

(D) Prepares pupils for employment and postsecondary education. Sequenced courses shall be linked to certificate and degree programs in the region, where possible.

(E) Whenever possible, prepares pupils for industry-recognized certifications.

(F) Whenever possible and appropriate, offers career technical education courses that also meet the subject requirements for admission to the California State University and the University of California.

(3) A class schedule that limits the attendance to the classes required in paragraphs (1) and (2) to pupils of the academy. Whenever possible, these classes should be block scheduled in a cluster to provide flexibility to academy teachers. During the 12th grade the number of academic classes may vary.

(4) A mentor from the business community during the pupil's 11th grade year.

(5) An employer-based internship or work experience that occurs in the summer following the 11th grade or during 12th grade year.

(6) Additional motivational activities with private sector involvement to encourage academic and occupational preparation.

(f) Assurance that academy teachers have a common planning period to interchange pupil and educational information. A second planning period should be provided for the lead teacher in addition to the normal planning period for full-time teachers and be supported as a part of the school district's matching funds, whenever practical.

SEC. 4. This act shall become operative on July 1, 2011, and shall be implemented commencing with the 2011–12 school year.